

# South Africa's participation in the activities of Codex Alimentarius Commission

## Thematic Session on Standards Development in Codex

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# APPROACH



- Policy guidance on Codex
- Aim and objectives of SA participation in Codex
- SA participation including coordination and what constitute SA delegation
- Preparations for Codex Sessions (Prep and feed-back meetings)
- Opportunities for South Africa as a member of Codex
- Challenges faced by South Africa in its participation in Codex  
(How can we improve?)

# POLICY GUIDANCE



- The participation of South Africa in the international fora, notably the United Nations (UN) system and its agencies, is in response to the challenges that are central to the future of all humanity and that pose a threat to global political and economic stability and security.
- South Africa's participation is guided by its Foreign Policy and international relations programmes, which further recognizes that in order to achieve a better life for all, development, must be pursued from a global perspective.
- UN SDG'S ??



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# AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF SA's PARTICIPATION



- South Africa's participation is driven by the vision to contribute and influence Codex norms, standards and guidelines in order to protect the health of consumers and promote fair practices in international food trade to the benefit of the food industry in both the agricultural, manufacturing sectors and other relevant stakeholders.
- South Africa's active participation at Standard Setting contribute to and enhance our Industry's competitiveness where the Standards between us and our trading partners are harmonized levelling the playing field of trade.



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# Coordination of RSA participation in Codex



- A member of the CAC since 1994
- Established the National Codex Contact Point within the Department of Health, Directorate: Food Control
- South Africa participate in Codex through 3 Competent Authorities:
  - **Department of Health (DOH)**
  - **Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)**
  - **National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS)(DTIC)**
- Currently actively participates in **15** Codex subsidiary bodies, each with a Coordinator.
- SA coordinate participation through the Codex Contact Point (NCCP) and National Codex Coordinators Forum (NCCF)



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- Coordinators are officials with subject expertise on activities of specific Codex Committees. Nominated by Competent Authorities
- Coordinators are usually chosen to be heads of delegations
- We also follow Guidelines from DIRCO, wherein participation will always be led by senior official/representative
- Participation is also in liaison with our Foreign representations abroad in case there are issues for noting.
- Preparatory and feedback meeting are generally led by the coordinators, in collaboration with the NCCP



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# List of committees and national coordinators



1. COMMISSION(CAC)	Mr. Malose Matlala (National Codex Contact Point)
<b>CODEX SUBSIDIARY BODIES</b>	<b>NATIONAL COORDINATORS</b>
2. Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP)	Mr. Malose Matlala (National Codex Contact Point)
3. Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)	Ms Nolene Naicker Department of Health <b>Seconder: Ms. Zandile Kubeka (DoH)</b>
4. Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)	Mr. E Moruke, (DALRRD) <b>Seconder: Ms Anele Bougart, (National Health Laboratory Services)</b>
5. Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)	Ms S. Parring, Department of Health <b>Seconder: Mr Deon Jacobs (NRCS)</b>
6. Codex Committee on Residues for Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRDVF)	Dr. Mphane Molefe (DALRRD) <b>Seconder: Dr Alice Sigobodhla (SAHPRA)</b>
7. Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR)	Ms A Madzivhandila (DoH) <b>Seconder: Ms. Precious Mkula (DALRRD)</b>
8. Codex Committee on Food Labelling(CCFL)	Ms. A Godzwana, Department of Health <b>Seconder: Mr. Malose Matlala (DoH)</b>



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# List of Committees and National Coordinators....



CODEX SUBSIDIARY BODIES	NATIONAL COORDINATORS
9. Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS)	Mr Deon Jacobs, NRCS <b>Secunder: Mr Gilbert Mediroe (DALRRD)</b>
10. Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)	Mr Simphiwe Mathenjwa, DALRRD <b>Secunder: Ms. Purity Mkhize (DALRRD)</b>
11. Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)	Ms Yvonne Tsiane, DoH <b>Secunder:</b>
12. Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)	Ms Julia Masuku, DoH <b>Secunder: Ms Yvonne Tsiane, DoH</b>
13. Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV)	Ms Caroline Makobe <b>Secunder: Ms. Tebogo Chipane (DALRRD)</b>
14. Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)	Mr Deon Jacobs, NRCS <b>Secunder: Mr John Foord (DFFE)</b>
15. Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa(CCAFRICA)	Mr. MD Matlala (National Codex Contact Point)



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# Guidance for Coordinators and Seconders



- Competent Authorities responsible for food safety and food control have improved i.t.o communication, coordination, and preparation for Codex meetings with the stakeholders.
- The roles of the Coordinators/Seconders have been maximized to ensure that inputs and country positions are made through effective consultations and participation of various stakeholders. This has led to increased contribution of inputs and comments from stakeholders (mostly industry organizations).
- Participation of Coordinators/Seconders in seminars/workshops of stakeholders (industry to consumer organisations, as well as academic programmes) on the relevance of Codex and to encourage stakeholder participation in these programmes. This has led to an understanding that.. **“Food Safety, everyone's business and everybody’s responsibility”**



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# Preparations for Codex Sessions/EWG/OCS



- Preparations for Codex Sessions ([Preparatory meetings](#))
- Solicit inputs and expert advice from stakeholders (incl. industry, research institutions, academia etc.)
- Provide technical rationale and justification (science or other factors)
- Consultations in preparing national positions (preparatory meetings)
  - [Physical vs Electronic](#)
- Reporting back: [Feed-back meetings](#) (1 – 4 weeks after publication of the meeting report)
- Participation in Regional Preparatory meetings-CCAFRICA Contact Points
- Participation in colloquium to prepare Inter Regional Positions



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# Opportunities for participation of South Africa in Codex



- South Africa considers Codex text when developing Food Legislation
- Codex text has improved and lessened impediments to international trade by providing clear guidance, to ensure harmonisation in view of our obligations to WTO Agreements
- **Take advantage of the risk assessment conducted by the 4 FAO/WHO expert bodies (JECFA, JMPR, JEMRA and JEMNU)** that provide scientific advice to Codex, FAO/WHO, which offer the sound scientific evidence and justification to defend legislation. Not every country has resources for scientific advice and risk assessments
- Virtual and Hybrid participation allowed Members which cannot travel and attend physical meetings
- The OCS, EWG and actual sessions which provide opportunity to participate in Standards development.



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# Opportunities for participation of South Africa in Codex ....continued



- SA continues to benefit in the improved ability of Codex to develop standards relevant to the needs of its members, including emerging issues as well as where there is no regulatory guidance.
- Empowered Members in the role they play in the context of managing food safety particularly during a global pandemic. Codex standards and guidelines has assisted during the Covid-19 pandemic (clarifying confusions and misinformation)
- The work of Codex has also to enable the understanding of food safety by our policy makers. Ensuring that there is always support and sustainable resource allocation for the development, implementation and application of national legislation.



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# Challenges faced by South Africa in its participation in Codex



- Consistency and continuity in attendance – resources e.g. Gov, etc.
- Effective preparation, including inputs in standards development from stakeholders due to limited access to stakeholders' participation (expert advice)
- Lack/ low level of participation from the industry or other relevant stakeholders (e.g. academia, research organizations) in EWG and OCS. In the case where there is, often the participants have limited/ no expertise in the subject matter.
- Lack of scientific data to support positions during the sessions
- Securing ICT facilities for virtual meetings and also the different time zones



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